



Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee

Minutes

Date: March 22nd, 2023

Time: 7:15PM

Location: Via Zoom conference

Attendees: *Executive committee:* Adam MacNeill (chairing), Linda Epstein (pending confirmation), Jack Johnson, Muris Kobaslija, Doug Mayo-Wells, Scott Smith (TAC liaison)

Members of the public: Len Greenberg, Phil Goff, Stephan Miller, Petru Sofio, Laura Swan (TAC chair)

1. Greetings and introductions, ground rules for online meetings

Adam MacNeill advises that the meeting is held remotely related to extension of COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency. MacNeill notifies attendees that Committee secretary Doug Mayo-Wells is taking minutes; the meeting is being recorded for the purposes of verifying the minutes; and the recording will be deleted after the minutes are approved. MacNeill confirms the committee members and others in attendance for the meeting.

2. Approval of the outstanding minutes for previous meetings

Scott Smith moves to approve the February minutes as amended

Motion carries, none opposed (1 abstention)

3. Visit from Claire Ricker

Claire Ricker is the new (since September) Director of Planning and Community Development. She was unable to attend as planned.

The Town has hired a new transportation coordinator, but has not yet announced a name or start date.

4. Report from COBWEB Officer

Not present

5. TAC (Transportation Advisory Committee) report

Two relevant items from TAC meeting last week:

- a. Chestnut St. reconstruction is planned for this construction season, including bumpouts, crosswalk enhancements, bike lanes, and some buffering. (Consultant planning for additional striping on Medford St. is ongoing.)
- b. Plans presented for Warren St, adding crosswalks and bumpouts, with parking lane used for biking, and bumpouts could negatively affect bike traffic. (The plan assumes parking removal is not an option.) Warren St is 37' so parking removal on only one side could facilitate minimal bike lanes on both sides. (The new 48" passing distance law has little effect on the minimum bike lane width for 10.5' travel lanes.)

6. Allocation of ABAC funds

Deferring discussion until April meeting

7. Lexington's renewal application for Bike Friendly Community status

Residents of other communities who ride in Lexington are invited to participate in the survey https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BFC_Spring23

Phil Goff is the project lead for Lexington bike plan, Daniel Amstutz is also working on the project.

A survey will shortly be released in preparation for the first Lexington meeting on the townwide bike and pedestrian plan, on April 4, which will include a map so participants can indicate where they want to see improvements.

Action item: Phil Goff to send link to the Lexington Bike and Pedestrian plan survey

8. Spring Social Event

ABAC discusses renting a small space for an event during or near Bike to Work Week (May 15th-19th) (see <https://www.baystatebikemonth.org>).

Phil Goff suggests a presentation on Neighborways in Somerville (Hancock St) as a potential topic

Action item: Scott Smith will look into renting a room

Scott Smith moves to authorize spending up to \$300 of ABAC's funds to support the event.

Adam MacNeill seconds the motion

Motion passes; none opposed

9. Spring Cleanup of Bikeway

EALS recently elected not to do a pickup of Alewife Greenway because it had recently been cleaned.

Hardy School is planning a trash pickup-a-thon for April 30 with focus on the bike path and Magnolia park

EALS has usually coordinated spring pickup with Earth Day (Sat Apr 22) or Sunday after.

Muris Kobaslija suggests that by combining events we can have more impact throughout Arlington and not just near Alewife

Phil Goff suggests that the Hardy group could focus on the stretch from the Kickstand Cafe to Thorndike Field, EALS group could take the Greenway and ABAC could clean from Rt 60 west toward Trader Joe's

10. Spring Tour of Arlington

Tentative date of May 21 set (week after Mother's day)

It is possible to use or adapt an existing route, but Hurd field may not be a good starting point because of construction. Routes have tried to avoid challenging hills and provide safe experience for novice riders, typically riding along the bikeway or in a loop around East Arlington. It may be interesting to focus on new town features (High School) or bike infrastructure and opportunities to improve bike infrastructure.

We will refine the plan in April.

11. Dates for this year's meetings

April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16, September 20, October 18, November 15, December 20

The Governor's order permitting online meetings expires at the end of March. It will likely be extended, but that has not been formalized and the extension date is still under discussion. [Note: On March 29, Governor Healey signed into law a supplemental budget bill which extends the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025.]

Action item: Christopher Tonkin to reserve a physical room for April 19 in the event the Governor's order is not extended

ABAC could potentially alternate between in-person and remote meetings. Hybrid meetings with in-room and remote participants are currently challenging for the Town. Claire Ricker may have guidance for the committee.

Christopher Tonkin will not be able to attend in September.

12. Mass Ave/Appleton

Phil Goff and Petru Sofio raise concerns about the state of the Mass Ave/Appleton project:

- The Select Board's split decision which requires the consultant to revise the plan to include parking on both sides
- The most recent, and final, public meeting was held after the Select Board review, and presented options which the Select Board had already declined to approve
- Final plan is due by June 2nd to apply for funding and avoid further construction delays, which does not allow for more input either from the Mass Ave/Appleton Design Review Committee or from the public
- Upcoming Town election could change the makeup of the Select Board and have an impact

Scott Smith and Petru Sofio reiterate that a quick build solution is not adequate to make the intersection safe for all users (bikes can easily reach 20mph on the eastbound downhill just coasting).

Scott Smith has 3 suggestions for the design:

- Design for minimum speed of 15mph for bikes, and make sure curves accommodate that safely – if it is too slow, some cyclists will not use it
- Make sure traffic signal synchronization does not encourage bicyclists to ride at unsafe speeds (e.g., set to 20mph vs 25mph, nothing requires the Town to synchronize signals for the speed limit)
- Instead of closing Appleton PI completely, make it right-turn-only, and provide parking accommodation for eastbound motorists

The last point is not in this committee's purview.

Petru Sofio notes that although no turn on red signs are in the current plan, other signage (such as speed advisory signs for cyclists) has not yet been designed.

Scott Smith has previously suggested a speed feedback sign eastbound for all operators (cyclists and motor vehicles).

Len Greenberg notes that bump outs will require cyclists to slow down, rumble strips could also be explored.

Adam MacNeill moves to reiterate ABAC's support for bike-safe design as follows:

"ABAC is making a statement in support of design for Mass Ave/Appleton as presented at the public meeting on March 15, 2023 and reiterates its support for design and structure that is safe for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists, and encourages safe speed though signal coordination. Further ABAC believes it is exceptionally important to meet the June 2 grant application deadline to secure funding, rather than delaying the project a year or more."

Scott Smith seconds the motion

Motion carries, none opposed

13. Any other business

Scott Smith mentions a communication from James Feeney [then Assistant Town Manager; Town Manager as of April 11] discussed at TAC with two relevant items:

Concerns have previously been raised about the lack of bike parking at Town Hall. More bike parking is planned, but specific details are not yet available. Jack Johnson notes that the original bike racks at Town Hall were one of the first issues ABAC addressed.

Additionally recommendations are sought for additional bike parking in the Heights. Narrow sidewalks make this challenging. Not all residents may be aware that the MBTA

has a bike rack at the depot. There may be potential for racks at Park Ave, or on side streets/alleyways. (Some off-street racks are sponsored by Cambridge Savings Bank)

Linda Epstein notes that bike racks at Hurd field are often full, more parking there may be beneficial as well.

Motion to adjourn

Adjourned